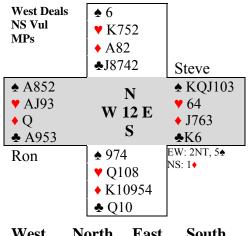
May 18, 2010

by Steve Moese (Mike Purcell ed.) Declarer Play LEVEL: Basic/Intermediate



West North East South
2◆¹ Pass 3♠ Pass
4♠ All Pass
South leads ♠9

1= 11-15 HCP and 0/1 • 43/34/44 in majors 14/05 in minors

Standard/or 2/1GF Auction:									
West	North	East	South						
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass						
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass						

Tuesday Evening May 18, 2010, Club Championship. Mr. Michael Lipp Director. Cincinnati Bridge Association Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070. My partner is Ron Babcock. We play Precision.

A sound major suit game in a revealing auction prompts declarer to find the overtrick. Count tricks before drawing trumps.

The Bidding

West's opening bid limited and shows a narrow shape set: 3415, 4315, 4414, 4405. This convention is required by Precision since 1♣ is strong artificial and forcing (we cannot open West's hand 1♣) and 1 of a Major promises 5 cards. Some Precision players fold these hands into their 1♠ opening. The Standard sequence should be common. Note if West undervalues the hand for ♠s, East has enough to invite in his/her own right.

The Play

This should be a common game. East can count 1 loser in ♥s and 1 in ♦s, but there are only 8 Top Winners. When the total of winners plus losers is less than 13, look to score trumps separately. The trump lead appears to take away a ruff in dummy. Leading trumps when declarer is likely to have an 8 or 9 card fit and a singleton in

one hand is often a good attack. However the $\clubsuit 9$ promotes dummy's $\clubsuit 8$ - so score all trumps individually on a high cross ruff.

After winning the ♠A, declarer plays the ♠Q from dummy, won by North. North switches to a ♣ won in hand by declarer with the ♣K. A ♣ to the ♣A (noting the fall of the ♣10 and ♣Q from South) does not deter East from the cross ruff – East's trumps are high. Cashing the ♥A then ruffing ♣s and ♦s leads to 11 tricks. South did well to pitch away all ♦s on ♣ ruffs on this hand – a good tactic when facing a cross ruff is to pitch cards in the suit declarer is ruffing so you can over ruff. However pitching the ♦K set up the ♦J in East's hand so it was an easy matter to draw 2 rounds of trump and cash the good ♦ at the end. Either

way careful play leads to 11 tricks +450 for EW worth 6.5 of 7 MPs.

NS Pair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MPs	2	2	6.5	2		6.5		2	2	2
Score	420	420	450	420		450		420	420	420

Post Mortem

Players who draw trump on this hand face fewer extra trump tricks and have to fall back on the ♥ finesses. After 3 rounds of trump are drawn declarer cannot avoid losing 2 ♦s and a ♥.

Regardless of bidding system, West's hand is the equivalent of 16 Support Points once East responds 1♠ (13 HCP + 3 SPs for the singleton ♦. Do NOT count 2 HCP for the stiff ♦Q.) Invite Game!

Learning Points

- 1. Always consider a cross ruff scoring trumps singly often produces more tricks than developing weak 4-2 suits. Be sure to cash side suit winners before ruffing or opponents might ruff your winners later!
- 2. When partner responds a major and you have an opening hand, 4 card support with a side singleton, be sure to invite game. Your hand just got bigger.

Key Words: Support Points, High Cross Ruff, Trump Opening Lead, Discard Declarer's Ruffing Suit